

• SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY •

DANIEL DE LEON



Internationalist

**BY ARNOLD
PETERSEN**

PRICE

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INTERNATIONALIST

By Arnold Petersen

*An Address Delivered at the
De Leon Commemoration,
New York City, December 12, 1943.*

De Leon said: "Capitalism is international, and so is Socialism to be, and Socialism would not be international if capitalism were not. It is only in proportion as it becomes international capitalism that Socialism becomes so.....The Socialist Revolution is expected to be the culminating revolution of the human race. It is perfectly just that [the workers of] all nations should indicate by some tangible demonstration that they are brothers."

This and like trenchant observations the National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party weaves into the fabric of an address that illuminates the question of internationalism—the fact of capitalist internationalism against the necessity of working class internationalism, of Universal Human Brotherhood. International economic imperialism, with its obverse, industrial feudalism, is analyzed. Nationalism is defined. The author deals briefly with matters collateral to the subject, such as Anti-Semitism, the so-called Negro question, etc. And especial emphasis is placed on the evolution, debacle and "treason to the class interests of the workers" of the German Social Democracy and kindred reform outfits. In treating of today's international events and trends, the author proves once again the prescience of De Leon, the Socialist Internationalist.

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By

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I.

**Capitalist Postwar World:
International Economic Imperialism**

Mr. Chairman, Comrades and Friends of the
Socialist Labor Party.

We are again met to commemorate the birth of the great American Marxist and Social Architect, Daniel De Leon. The subject of today's address, "Daniel De Leon—Internationalist," was chosen because it was felt to be one more facet of the De Leon genius that might profitably be explored, and also because it seemed peculiarly timely. In reviewing De Leon's activities as a Socialist internationalist, I shall find it necessary to touch briefly on a few matters collateral to the subject, such as race-hatred, anti-Semitism, national-reformism, etc. And I intend, very briefly, to consider some aspects of the European, and particularly the German, Social Democracy, first, insofar as they relate to De Leon's international activities; and, secondly, in order to point the Marxist moral and to "adorn" the De Leonist tale, with particular reference to the Social Democratic debacle, and the Social Democratic treason to the class interests of the workers—the disruption of proletarian international solidarity by the Social Democracy and their allies.

*

Great social crises produce what at first blush appear to be the most amazing, irreconcilable contradictions. And the present global war—the greatest crisis

that has ever faced civilized man—is no exception. On the contrary, it has sharpened all the contradictions more or less peculiar to capitalism, and produced new ones which appear insoluble—to the supporters of capitalism, or class-ruled societies generally, they *are* insoluble. There is, first and foremost, the war itself, a war ostensibly fought to preserve democratic rights and liberties, but which more and more suppresses these, or creates conditions where they cannot be exercised; again, one witnesses destruction and destructiveness on an unparalleled scale, while, on the other hand, there is to be seen a constructiveness, a productive capacity and productive performance never before equalled on this earth; millions are slain or maimed for life, the most ruthless disregard for human life manifesting itself, and yet men of science are going to the uttermost limits in devising methods and cures to save human lives; men are taught and trained to kill systematically, and the basest and most brutish instincts are played upon in order to arouse the blood-lust, and to destroy the instincts of humanity which centuries of civilizing and ennobling efforts have nurtured, and yet it is expected of these victims of the military profession (or at least those returning) to carry forward the civilization which they are told is being threatened by alien barbarians alone. And in the presence of the most intense nationalism—that is, artificially fostered nationalism—the goal and ideal of international fellowship in a postwar world is being preached with increasing fervor by the “nationalists” themselves!

But the crowning contradiction of all is the fact that it is not the war itself which now commands primary or major consideration, but rather the postwar world, or, as it is put in certain circles, the *war* of the

postwar world, or World War III, as it is generally designated. Newspapers, magazines, public forums, the radio—all echo and re-echo the question: What kind of a world is going to emerge out of the flames of the global war? How will it be organized, how constituted? Outside the Marxist movement there is little disagreement as to the fundamental basis of the postwar world, for all agree, with only shades of differences of opinion, that it will be a “free enterprise world,” a world of commerce, a trading world, which is to say a *fighting world*, or, in short, a continued capitalist, or super-capitalist world. At least, that is what the upholders and allies of capitalism (including Stalinist Russia) would like it to be; that is what they are striving to make it. And each of the three major powers, be it the United States, Great Britain, or Stalinist Russia, is quite sure that its particular interests will be predominant in the postwar world, though they write and orate endlessly on the postwar world collaboration which they promise each other, and the world at large, they will put into effect and practice.

Assuming the workers of the world do not put an end to capitalism in all its forms everywhere, it is anybody's guess as to what will be the precise form of this postwar world, that is, as to details; but this we do know: Capitalism cannot survive as we understand the term. What *will* survive (on a world-wide scale) will consolidate itself as an international economic imperialism; and this we know also: In such a world the workers will continue as industrial serfs, their social status further degraded, their individual liberties further restricted, and their early hope of emancipation from economic serfdom, from wage slavery, deferred to an uncertain future—the distance of which none would

now be able to foretell. It may mean, to use De Leon's phrase, a renewed tabling of the motion of the social question, with new problems confronting the Marxist revolutionists, among the most serious of which will be the usual inertia of a suppressed class that lost its opportunity at the historically ripe, and psychologically right, moment. For it is conceivable (I do not say it is probable) that the workers in the postwar world may, by and large, find themselves enjoying slightly more of the elementary creature comforts, more of the basic security against mere animal wants. But, if they find themselves in such a situation, we shall know that they will have bartered away their rights as free men, or, even worse, that they may have lost their love of freedom, their wish to be free men and free women in a free society of their own making, a free society suited for, and responsive to, their own larger interests and needs. De Leon foresaw the possibility of just such a situation, and two years before he died he gave expression to it in these significant words:

"Capitalism is not to be saved. If Socialism does not triumph now, then Imperialism [meaning economic imperialism] will seize our society and establish a sort of feudo-capitalism that will set back the wheels of Progress, and force Freedom to start all over again along some fresh path."

II.

Pre-Capitalist "Nation."

However, as Marxists we do not preoccupy our minds unduly with the possibility of working class defeat. While soberly recognizing that possibility, we rather stress the prospects of early victory, taking into

account all the factors that make for victory and a higher freedom in an enlarged civilization. And among those factors are precisely the emergence of society out of the procrustean national bed into the spacious internationalism that looms before us. It is true, of course, that capitalism has been international in fact for decades, in the sense that capitalists have not recognized national boundaries when it came to satisfying what they considered their legitimate interests. And, by the same token, Socialism has been international in the sense that Marxists have never recognized the narrow boundaries of nations as anything but more or less accidental lines formed as an accompaniment to the development of capitalism—lines which, to be sure, had to be respected for practical reasons, and in order to avoid chaos, but otherwise to be discarded, or at least in practice disregarded, when the social system that brought them into being was itself discarded.

Socialist Internationalism.

For just as capitalism was driven more and more to leap boundary lines, though retaining these for local and selfish, narrow capitalist group reasons, so Socialism predicated itself on the fact that the essential class interests of the workers were identical, regardless of color, race or country, and, as far as possible, sought to give practical expression to working class internationalism, against the day when this internationalism would be an established fact instead of a mere aspiration. And here we note this anomaly: While capitalism in theory preached nationalism, using the so-called national spirit chiefly for purposes of capitalist class propaganda, for the rest disregarding it in its actual invasion of the in-

ternational field, Socialism preached internationalism while perforce finding itself compelled to operate within the restricted limits of the respective countries, even though bonds of fraternity united the Socialist workers of one country with their brothers in all other countries.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels were the first to give practical expression to working class internationalism when they uttered the memorable winged words: "Workers of all countries, unite!" and when later they (more specifically Marx) launched the International Workingmen's Association, also called the First International. But, next to Marx and Engels, the greatest Internationalist of modern times was the American Marxist and social scientist, Daniel De Leon.

Internationalism to De Leon was no mere catchword, no mere empty phrase, nor a mere pious wish. It was a fact to be recognized as having an important bearing on the work that had to be done in his chosen field, the United States of America. De Leon realized, of course, that each country's Socialist movement had to adjust or adapt itself to the conditions peculiar to the particular country. He understood that modern nations were not the results of caprice or arbitrary design, despite the exceptions that could be cited—that is, cases of forced annexation of neighboring territory. In such cases, however, there would be no nation in the proper historic sense, but a mere political entity, unrelated to normal social development. As a true Internationalist, he knew that modern nations were the by-products, so to speak, of economic development. He knew, as all Marxists know, that the concept of nation (as we understand the term) came into being with the rise and growth of capitalism.

What Is a "Nation"?

Before capitalism the word *nation* had a much broader meaning. Its original derivation is from the Latin *natio* which simply means birth—that word itself having been borrowed from the name of the goddess of birth, Natio. Our dictionary tells us that *nation* was used broadly to describe an aggregation of people of the same ethnic family, or who spoke the same language or cognate languages. It is also defined as "a tribe, a community, or congregation, whether of men or animals." Edmund Spenser, in his "Faery Queene," speaks of a "nation of unfortunate and fatall birds"; Ben Jonson, contemporary of Shakespeare, tells the medicos that "You are a subtile nation, you physicians!" And the seventeenth century satirist and poet, Samuel Butler, mockingly refers to lawyers as "too wise a nation"! We speak of the "Iroquois nation," though the League or the Confederacy of the Iroquois had none of the characteristics of a nation as we now use the term. Lewis Morgan observes that the Iroquois confederacy "produced a gentile society more complex than that of a single tribe," but he emphasizes that it was still a gentile, i.e., non-political, society, adding that "It was, however, a stage of progress in the direction of a nation. . . ." It is of interest and significance here to recall De Leon's use of the word *nation* in a connection which usually precludes its use as a proper current term. Referring to the essential internationality of capitalists and workers, De Leon said:

"There are but two nations in the world today—the capitalist class nation, which exploits and lives upon the sweat of the brow of the working class nation, the sweat of whose brow, through unrequited toil, feeds,

clothes, houses and fattens the capitalist class nation."

Whether De Leon here simply used the term *nation* as a paraphrase, or in recognition of the meaning of the term in its pre-capitalist sense, I do not know, but I prefer to believe the latter.

III.

The Nation a Step in Social Evolution

As I said before, nations, as we now understand the term, came into existence with the emergence of capitalism as the dominant force in society. Feudalism was essentially parochial. The feudal lord exercised complete sovereignty over his own domain, and over the serfs on his lands, subject only to certain tributes and services he had to render the overlord, the king. As the author of the excellent little pamphlet, "Socialism and the State,"* so well has put it:

"In feudal times each local community was a self-sufficing whole and its needs were supplied mainly from its own sources. Little contact was made with the outside world and local exclusiveness prevailed everywhere. He who did not belong to the community was a stranger, a foreigner. Even if he lived in the village he was still a foreigner unless he had a holding of land in the mark. There was no national language, the various communities having their own dialects. The Nation did not then exist though the king might claim certain territory as his realm. The villagers.... did

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not think of themselves as Frenchmen, or Englishmen, but rather folk of the manor and of the lord who held it, the master of the land who had power of life and death over them."

This narrow parochialism conflicted to an ever increasing extent with the activities, the desires and aspirations of the rising capitalist class whose members naturally found the feudal laws and restrictions irksome, and obstacles to what they conceived to be legitimate claims. To quote again from "Socialism and the State":

"Commerce needed safety for travel and transport to and from ports and markets. This conflicted with the claims of feudal lords for unquestioned rule within their estates. Trade needed peaceful and stable conditions for its operations, whilst feudalism was by its very nature turbulent and warlike. Trade needed free workers for regularity of production which was impossible of attainment whilst feudal barons claimed absolute rights over the time and labor of the people.

"Trade and commerce urgently needed centralized government over wider areas in which equal laws should be enforced, whilst feudal barons would allow no law except that of the sword within their little holdings. And commerce now needed an efficient army to protect its interests abroad, to defeat competitor countries, conquer new markets, as well as to defend the safety of the roads at home against the feudal lords and their warrior retainers.

"These and similar antagonisms were springing up everywhere between the merchant class and the existing feudal domination. The need for the *political nation*

was already there. Its foundation stones were laid by commerce whose interests it was destined to serve. Political concentration under a leader powerful enough and with sufficient force at his back to enforce unity of administration, became the economic necessity of the time."

Setting the Stage for Internationalism.

In the measure that capitalism spread over ever wider areas of the earth, the nations expanded and at the same time consolidated their positions and power, in so doing clashing with each other, and we have the beginning of wars for markets, for new territory, for spheres of influence—in short, the stage was being set for the era of international economic imperialism, and all that goes with it. At the same time the sciences and the arts flourished, national languages grew and became definitely outlined and established. And with it all increased the sense of universal oneness—the spirit of internationalism spread more and more, though it took a long time for that spirit to become identified with any definite concept of international fraternity, whether of the ruling or the ruled classes.

However, what we must understand is that nationalism and internationalism alike are accompaniments to, or products of, expanding, ever-developing capitalism. And in the measure that capitalism becomes international, in that same measure Socialism becomes international. At the Tenth Convention of the Socialist Labor Party, held in 1900, De Leon said that "Capitalism is, must be, and cannot be otherwise than international." And he added: "Capitalism is international, and so is Socialism to be, and Socialism would not be international if capitalism were not. *It is only in*

proportion as it becomes international capitalism that Socialism becomes so. . . . The Social Revolution is expected to be the culminating revolution of the human race. It is perfectly just that [the workers of] all nations should indicate by some tangible demonstration that they are brothers."

Socialism Not Anti-National.

De Leon, however, occasionally found it necessary to warn against the danger of misconstruing Socialist internationalism as the opposite of nationalism—that is, as anti-nationalism. Nationalism, representing a growth, had come into being to serve a purpose in the evolutionary process of society and, since it was not the result of arbitrary whim, neither could it be disregarded or abolished out of hand, any more than we can disregard or abolish the State out of hand. Without nationalism (not to be confused with jingoism, or phony patriotism—the kind denounced by Dr. Johnson as the last refuge of the scoundrel)—without nationalism there could be no inter-nationalism, since the latter flows from, and rests upon, the former. Without nationalism (always remembering that we are speaking of a world in which capitalism is the ruling principle)—without nationalism there would be chaos. Lenin expressed this very well when in 1915 he said:

"What is international is not at all anti-national; we stand for the rights of nations to self-assertion. . . . the present imperialist war is a war of the great nations conducted *for the purpose* of oppressing new nations. . . . In the era of imperialism there can be no other *salvation* for the *majority* of the nations of the world outside of revolutionary action undertaken by

the proletariat of the great nations and reaching beyond the boundaries of nationality, breaking those boundaries, overthrowing the international bourgeoisie. While the bourgeoisie is not overthrown, there remain nations known as 'great powers,' i.e., there remains the oppression of nine-tenths of the nations of the whole world. The overthrow of the bourgeoisie will tremendously accelerate the collapse of every kind of national *partition* without decreasing, but on the contrary increasing millions of times, the 'differentiation' of humanity, if we are to understand by this the wealth and the variety of spiritual life, trends of ideas, tendencies, shadings."

Parenthetically, since Stalinist Russia is now hailed and accepted by international-minded capitalists as one of the "great powers," it is interesting to note how perfectly the Stalinist foreign policy fits Lenin's description of the great powers as oppressors of small nations, beginning (in the case of Russia) with the wanton and unscrupulous invasion of Finland by Stalin during the period of his partnership with Hitler, and apparently to continue with the forcible annexation of the Baltic states, and whatever else may be within the grasp of a victorious Stalinist Russia during or after the global war!

IV.

De Leonist Internationalism Rejects Nativism

It was De Leon's keen understanding of the relation of present-day nations to true internationalism which saved him, on the one hand, from the pitfalls of the social chauvinism into which the European Social

Democrats fell during the first world war (and into which the Stalinist social-chauvinists have fallen—or jumped—during this war); and, on the other hand, from the chaos and anarchy which would be invited by accepting as internationalism the amorphous thing designated as anti-nationalism. The latter is peculiarly the specialty of the petty bourgeois "rebel" known as the anarchist. For, just as the rational attitude of the Socialist toward religion becomes anti-religion, or professional "god killing," with the anarchist, and the sane attitude of the Marxist toward standard morality and the sex question becomes so-called free love with the anarchist, so the sound internationalism of Marxism is by the anarchist degenerated into irrational and chaotic anti-nationalism.

Nations Fated to Vanish.

Since nations under capitalism are, in fact, nothing else than the shells of the political State, it follows that nations as such will in the course of time disappear, or at least become merged into an integrated whole where differentiations are no more, relatively speaking, than the differentiations between individual human beings. The "nations," De Leon would say, under Socialism will be the integrated industries, which (cutting across all artificial barriers or boundaries) will embrace the peoples of the earth in one great human family. To De Leon there were not, of course, any superior or inferior nations, any more than there were superior or inferior races. In the true spirit of Socialist internationalism he recognized but two "races," the "race" of the exploiters, and the "race" of the exploited. The uniform they wore, or the color of their skins, were matters of no importance to him.

In quite a different sense it might also be said that the capitalist class likewise manifested indifference to race or nationality. De Leon's rejection of the nationalistic fetish and his refusal to draw the color line were, of course, prompted by considerations of *working class* international solidarity, while the attitude of the capitalist class was determined by considerations of *capitalist class* international solidarity—their internationalism was and is cynically selfish and inspired solely by prospects of profits and power. De Leon described that attitude graphically in these words:

"The capitalist class knows no country and no race, and any 'God' suits it so that 'God' approve of the exploitation of the worker. Despite all seeming wranglings, sometimes even wars, among them, the capitalist class is international, and presents a united front against the working class. But for that very reason the capitalist class is interested in keeping the workingmen divided among themselves. Hence it fomenters race and religious animosities that come down from the past."

De Leon—Foe of Racialism.

De Leon's unyielding stand on unrestricted immigration, for example, was one of the great practical manifestations of his internationalism, of his concept and practice of international working class solidarity. He fought this question of immigration out with the S.P. politicians and chauvinists to the bitter end. At the Amsterdam Congress in 1904 there was introduced an infamous anti-immigration resolution bearing the signatures, among others, of the S.P. corporation attorney, the late Morris Hillquit, and of Algernon

Lee (now basking in almost saintly glory as one of the outstanding Roosevelt-New Deal Social Democrats). This utterly reactionary resolution branded the bulk of the workers of the world as "inferior" and "backward" races, identifying these alleged backward and inferior races as "Chinese, Negroes, Etc." The "etcetera" crowned the infamy. As De Leon, in wrathful indignation, wrote: "Where is the line that separates 'inferior' from 'superior' races? What serious man, if he is a Socialist, what Socialist if he is a serious man, would indulge in 'etc.' in such important matters? To the native American proletariat [continued De Leon], the Irish was made to appear an 'inferior' race; to the Irish, the German; to the German, the Italian; to the Italian—and so down the line through the Swedes, the Poles, the Jews, the Armenians, the Japanese, to the end of the gamut. Socialism [thundered De Leon] knows not such insulting, iniquitous distinctions as 'inferior' and 'superior' races among the proletariat. It is for capitalism to fan the fires of such sentiments in its scheme to keep the proletariat divided."

To the credit of the International Congress at Amsterdam this foul libel upon the international proletariat was given such a reception that its reactionary proponents quickly withdrew it.

The so-called race problem is a collateral question of internationalism. In his denunciation of that evil thing, race-prejudice and race-discrimination, De Leon was unsparing and relentless. As long ago as 1899 he wrote on the so-called "Negro Question":

"The question is not whether the Negro is or is not an inferior race; the question is whether the Negro

should be treated as cattle, given only as much as will keep him alive so as to work and produce for a master, *or whether he shall have, hold and enjoy all that he produces and be robbed by none.* THERE IS NO 'NEGRO QUESTION' ANY MORE THAN A 'SEX QUESTION.' THERE IS THE LABOR OR SOCIAL QUESTION ONLY."

And nine years later he wrote:

"Under Socialism the Negro would occupy the identical position occupied by the White, the Yellow or the Brown man. Whoever works, whatever his color or creed, will enjoy the full fruit of his labor. . . . Opportunities, physical and mental, being equal to all, a man will be the architect of himself and esteemed by his architecture."

Anti-Semitism and Pro-Semitism.

On the subject of anti-Semitism, so-called, De Leon was equally uncompromising. His essay on anti-Semitism, though not a popular treatment of the subject, is a rebuke to those who nurture the particularly loathsome prejudice loosely referred to as anti-Semitism. In this respect he was in complete accord with the views expressed by Frederick Engels in a letter he wrote to an unknown correspondent, the letter being dated April 19, 1890:

"Anti-Semitism [wrote Engels] is nothing but the reaction of the medieval, decadent strata of society against modern society, which essentially consists of wage-earners and capitalists; under a mask of apparent Socialism it therefore only serves reactionary ends [How true that is of the infamous Nazi and Fascist

regimes, and their contemptible allies everywhere!] . . . Anti-Semitism falsifies the whole position of affairs. . . . We owe much to the Jews. To say nothing of Heine and Boerne, Marx was of purest Jewish blood; Lassalle was a Jew. . . . people of whose friendship I am proud are all Jews."

On the other hand, De Leon condemned "pro-Semitism" with almost equal emphasis, especially the "pro-Semitism" that would set the Jews apart as a chosen people, the propagandists and charlatans who mislead and confuse proletarians of "Jewish blood," to use Engels's phrase. In his speech on "Unity" (discussing the anomaly of a group of so-called "Zionists-Socialists" being represented at the International Socialist Congress), De Leon said:

"Socialism is essentially international. Nativism or nativistic aims are repugnant to Socialist thought. Socialism, being essentially practical, does recognize the material fact of existing races and nationalities. Indeed, the constituents of its Congresses are grouped accordingly. But at least not before the Stuttgart Congress was ever a body of men, whose first aim is the restoration of a nationality like the Zionist-Socialists, or Socialist-Zionists, recognized as entitled to a place in the International Congresses of Socialism. In the very nature of Socialist-Zionism, the Socialism in its program cannot be a thing to be striven after now; in the very nature of its program, the only thing upon which Zionist-Socialism [from its premises] can and must bend its present energies is the restoration of a nationality. That that cannot be done without the 'co-operation of classes' in that particular race goes without saying."

And again, at a time when the so-called Armenian question was being stirred, with the usual result of creating divisions and frustration of Marxian Socialist efforts, De Leon wrote:

"The Armenian, no more than any other nationality, that organizes itself abroad on its own national lines with an eye upon the eventual unification of its own nationality at home, or in some home yet to be found, is not Socialist, least of all Marxist. *Marxism rejects the theory that man is a clam wedded to the rock of his nativity.*"

In expressing such sentiments De Leon certified, not alone to the internationality of the Socialist and labor movement, but also to his own uncompromising Marxian or Proletarian Internationalism.

V.

A Demonstration of Working Class International Solidarity

We hear a great deal of talk these days about the Germans and Japanese, as a people, being savages and barbarians, who will have to be exterminated for the good of civilization, etc., etc. According to the theory advanced by those who advocate this barbaric and insane policy, the Germans, as a whole, and the Japanese, as a whole, are inherently evil; they are, it is claimed, fundamentally different from the rest of the human race, and so on and so forth. The fact that the mass of the Germans, the mass of the Japanese, are normal-

ly peaceful workingmen and workingwomen, who no more desire war, who no more lust for blood, than the masses in America, Russia, Great Britain, and in every other country on the globe, altogether escapes their would-be exterminators. The fact that, to their great misfortune, they have been saddled with brutish and fiendish ruling classes, who use their temporary powers in an attempt to subdue the rest of the world, for the ultimate purpose of enriching themselves, at the expense, primarily, of course, of the useful workers of all countries (including the workers of Germany and Japan)—that fact means nothing to the would-be exterminators of the German and Japanese peoples. The would-be exterminators also forget that the German and Japanese masses were the original victims of the ruling class bandits who enslave and exploit them.

If you protest against the savage and insane views or proposals of the would-be exterminators, when you try to reason with them, they "prove" their case by saying: Don't the Germans and the Japs submit to, and support, their gangster leaders? No one knows whether, or to what extent, the masses in the two countries *willingly* support their ruling classes. But whether they do so willingly or not, and whether their cause be "good" or "bad," the result would be exactly the same. For, until the present international madness has spent itself, *the masses in every war-embroiled country on the globe are practically helpless.* The age of the barricade fights and popular violent insurrections has gone forever. As a certain radio commentator said recently: "This is not the age of pitchfork revolutions."

No, it is the age of super-military power with weapons that are beyond the control and power of handling by individuals or groups of individuals, other

than those in power. The age of pitchfork revolutions reflected the stage of undeveloped capitalism, of small-scale production, with no or few centralized forces of production. The pitchforks and the small arms, and the once effective barricades, have become the mammoth mounted guns, the monster-size tanks, the airplanes and the deadly and devastating bombs, not to mention the floating fortresses and the treacherous submarines. *Above all, they have become the huge plants of production which (as this war has so well shown) in the final analysis determine the fortunes of a global war.* So internationalized has war become, so integrated and consolidated have the weapons of war become, that a mass-uprising against ruthless ruling classes, *anywhere*, could take the form only of a working class revolution against these ruling classes, with the seizure, and holding, of the means of production as the primary and all-important objective.

Demonstration of International Solidarity.

I have digressed somewhat. What I started to say had to do with a magnificent demonstration of international solidarity at the Amsterdam Congress, reported with noble enthusiasm by De Leon. The war between Czarist Russia and Imperialist Japan was at its height. Theoretically, the Japanese and the Russians were mortal enemies. Actually, as I have just shown, there could have been and there probably was no real enmity between the masses of the two countries. De Leon described a particular session of the Congress as being rather dull and "soporific." Van Koll of Holland was chairman of the session. But let De Leon tell the inspiring story:

"The Congress was giving distressing signs of listlessness when Plechanoff [Russian Marxist] jumped to the rescue. He sat . . . at Van Koll's left with Katayama, the delegate from Japan . . . at Van Koll's right. Plechanoff had been watching for his chance. The moment it came he seized it. He rose, stretched his arm across Van Koll's wide girth and took Katayama's hand. Katayama took the hint; he also arose and, symbolically, the Russian proletariat was shaking hands with their Japanese fellow wage-slaves. It was a well-thought demonstration, the work of a flash of genius. Apart from rousing the Congress from the languor it was dropping into, and driving it to frenzied applause, the handshake of Plechanoff and Katayama at that place was a pathetic rebuke to capitalism, whose code of practical morality was at the very hour being exemplified in the heaped up corpses of Russians and Japanese on the battlefields of Manchuria. It contrasted the gospel of humanity that Socialism is ushering into life, with the gospel of practical rapine that capitalism apotheosizes."

What would be the attitude of the would-be exterminators of the Japanese and German workers if such a demonstration were staged today? One shudders at the thought of the awful consequences! One can imagine, however, what the Stalinist puppets would say if a Russian and a Japanese worker would so demonstrate today. There would be wild shrieks about disrupting national unity, about anti-Soviet hatred, about stabbing our "great and noble ally" in the back, about holding the one and only Joe Stalin (Marshal Stalin to you!) in contempt, and so forth. But the spirits of Plechanoff and Katayama would exult, for they would

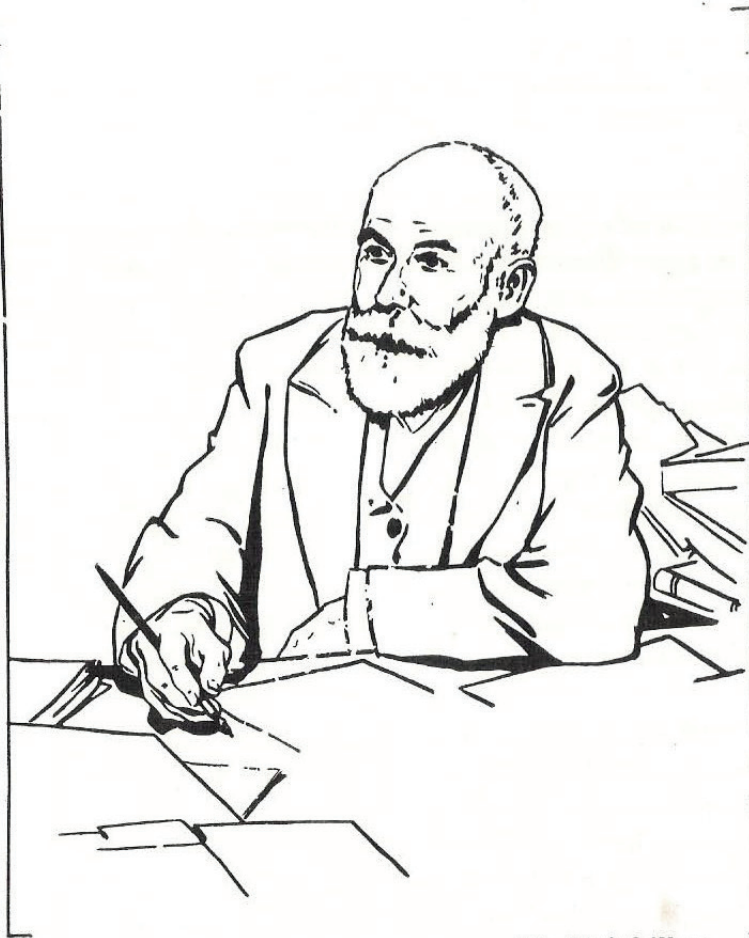
know that proletarian international solidarity is not dead, that it cannot, and will not, die, come capitalist hell and Stalinist high waters!

VI.

Social Democracy, Poisoned by National Reformism, Precursor of Nazism

Ardent internationalist though De Leon was, he ever came to the International Socialist Congresses with great misgivings. With minor reservations, he regarded these Congresses as demonstrations of little, if any, value, and yet we are grateful now that he went to them. His magnificent "Flashlights from the Amsterdam Congress" alone justifies all the pain and trouble it cost him to attend, and whatever money it cost the Party to have him go. With injustice to but very few of the delegates attending that Congress, and to the parties they represented, that brilliant "report" might with complete justice be given the various titles of "Reformers vs. Revolutionist," "Anti-Marxists vs. Marxism," "Compromisers vs. the Uncompromising," and "Petty Bourgeois Nationalists vs. the Socialist Internationalist," with particular emphasis on the latter. For, at every turn, De Leon would encounter the narrow spirit of nationalism, a nationalism not made more palatable by being served with Socialist pretenses and phrases.

De Leon's phrase, "The internationality of the Social Question," had meaning to but few of them, absorbed as they were in their own petty affairs, most of



W. Steinhilber

DANIEL DE LEON

Writing his report to the Amsterdam Congress 1904

which related to efforts at making capitalism tolerable for the wage slaves. America, though representing the highest in capitalist development, the country offering the almost perfect mold for Socialism, interested them very little. Internationalism was very well in theory, but we must be practical, you know! One of the delegates told De Leon that "America is a *terra incognita* to us"—America is an unknown land to the so-called Marxian internationalists, he said! By these parochial-minded Social Democrats the most reactionary labor fakers in Europe, as well as in America, were regarded as Socialist comrades. Notable among such "comrades" were the Mark Hanna labor lieutenant, John Mitchell, of unsavory memory, the chief labor faker, Sammy Gompers, and others who affectionately were referred to by the Social Democrats as Genosse Mitchell, Genosse Gompers, etc.!

Treason and Collapse of the Social Democracy.

It would be idle at this time to attempt to assess responsibility for the disruption of revolutionary internationalism, if we could learn nothing from such an assessment, but there are few persons of intelligence and understanding who would argue that the treason and collapse of the Social Democracy taught us no lessons. And in assessing this responsibility we must place by far the greater share at the doorstep of the German Social Democracy prior to Hitler, and, to a somewhat lesser degree, at the doorstep of Stalinist Russia. And let us never forget that the very evils inherent in Social Democratism and Stalinism alike were the evils residing in the narrow, nationalistic concepts and practices denounced constantly by Daniel De Leon.

Perhaps I should not say "denounced" unqualifiedly, for De Leon did make allowances for the European Social Democracy, especially the German. He did so particularly in the beginning of his career as Socialist scientist and revolutionary internationalist. In part he did excuse the German Social Democracy for getting lost in the swamps of compromise and reformism even though he maintained an increasingly sharply critical attitude toward the nationalistic Social Democrats. He made allowance (too much allowance, I think) for the fact that they were confronted with the task of removing the remnants of feudalism, which, while remaining, presented serious obstacles to the development of the Socialist movement—prevented the supposed Marxists from getting down to real Socialist business. The allowance De Leon made was, I believe, proper during the very early days of the Socialist movement in Germany, during the formative years when Liebknecht, Bebel, the youthful Kautsky (and Marx and Engels from London) combatted the reactionary regime and policies of Bismarck and his henchmen.

When Bismarck put into effect the so-called Exceptional, or anti-Socialist laws (1878-90), there arose an element in the Social Democratic movement that argued that the party should adjust itself to the Bismarck laws. Marx and Engels thundered against such a craven idea, denouncing it as cowardly and treacherous. Those Social Democrats who wanted to make their peace with the reaction argued that German Socialism had "attached too much importance to the winning of the masses and in so doing has neglected energetic propaganda among the so-called upper strata of society." They argued further that only members of the bourgeoisie had the time and intelligence to serve as

representatives in the Reichstag, to which Marx sarcastically replied: "So elect bourgeois!" And he added, by asking: "Is German Social Democracy really infected by the parliamentary disease and does it believe that through election by the people the Holy Ghost is poured upon the elected....?" We know now fully the answer to Marx's question, asked in 1879. In the same connection Marx also observed: "The Exceptional Laws have banned and outlawed the German party precisely *because* it was the only serious opposition party in Germany."

National Reformism Poison.

With the revocation of the anti-Socialist laws the German Social Democracy returned to normal activities, but Bismarck had accomplished his essential purpose: *He had injected the poison of national reformism into the body and soul of the Social Democracy.* Though outwardly resuming a Socialist appearance, though employing Marxist phrases (particularly in the more exclusive, the theoretical journals), inwardly the party had become, and remained, a petty, nationalistic bourgeois outfit. And as the old guard grew older, or passed from the scene, even the appearance of being Socialist grew less and less. The poison—the fatal poison—of national reformism, of compromise with bourgeois principles, and with the bourgeoisie itself, had, however, been injected even before the period of the anti-Socialist laws. The death-knell of German Marxian Socialism was originally sounded at Gotha in 1875 when the Marxists merged with (or rather, surrendered to) the Lassalleans, who were in effect, if not in intent, nothing more than Bismarck's errand-boys.

The Lassalleans may have been few, and the Marxist adherents many, and far abler. No matter. It takes but a few drops of poison to ruin a cask of good wine! Commenting on the program presented at Gotha by the Lassalleans, Marx wrote:

"Lassalle, contrary to the Communist Manifesto and to all earlier Socialism, regarded the labor movement from the narrowest *national* standpoint."

What I have just quoted is taken from the S.L.P. publication, "The Gotha Program," which De Leon was responsible for making available to the American reader. It was first published in the *Daily People* of January 7, 1900. Commending this important document to the reader, De Leon made the comment that "this is as valuable as it is hard reading. Let it not be superficially skimmed over. *Fusion always implies abandonment of principle.*"

Social Democracy and "National Socialism."

To consider "the labor movement from the narrowest *national* standpoint" became henceforth the regular practice and settled policy, not alone of the German Social Democracy, but of the entire European movement (with the exception of the British S.L.P.), and was imitated everywhere, and not the least by the shoddy and corrupt "Socialist party" of America. This kind of Socialism (which, of course, was no Socialism at all), deriving from Bismarck and Lassalle, might very properly have been described as "National Socialism" (with apologies to the honored name of Socialism), and I think it is as significant as it is logical that the Hitler

bandits should have adopted the term "National Socialism" as the designation for their monstrous gangster party and policies. For the German Social Democracy (however unintentionally) was as logically the precursor of Nazism as the American "Socialist party" was the precursor (or spiritual parent) of the present American Salinist party of political gangsterism, mis-calling itself the Communist party.

It is in no spirit of criticism that I express the belief that De Leon made too much allowance for the German (and generally the European) Social Democracy as regards their preoccupation with the remnants of feudalism. Whatever may have survived of such remnants by the turn of the century, they no longer constituted a real obstacle to the adoption of a sound Socialist program. The fact is that, as the remnants of feudality (persons and institutions) diminished or became almost indistinguishable from the modern plutocracy and its ambitions and practices, the Social Democracy became increasingly bourgeois, though the process (from Socialist premises) should have been exactly the reverse. In later years De Leon was certainly far more unqualifiedly critical of the German Social Democracy and its representatives, and I have no doubt that had De Leon lived through the First World War years, he would have been as unsparing in his condemnation of the base, anti-Socialist conduct of the latter-day Kautskys and Scheidemanns as was our Party at that time. And, with the added wisdom that hindsight gives, I cannot doubt that he would have agreed that the allowance made for the German Social Democracy should have been terminated, certainly at the turn of the century, if not before.

VII.

Nationalist "Parliamentary Disease" of Social Democracy Fatal

With the outbreak of the First World War, the European Social Democracy came out in its true colors, without any noteworthy exceptions. Within each party there were, of course, dissenters, but they could not materially affect the policies and course of their parties. Foremost in the betrayal of Socialism stood, of course, the German Social Democrats. This is not the occasion for going into details, but I cannot resist the temptation to comment briefly, and to cite a few facts, pertaining to the then postwar acts of the German Social Democracy, especially since it will serve to establish vindication of De Leon's position and criticism of the Social Democrats. A few years ago there was published in this country a book bearing the title "Inside Germany," by Albert C. Grzesinski.* It might more properly have been entitled "The Memoirs and Confessions of a Prussian Social Democratic Police Chief." For, among many other offices held by Mr. Grzesinski at various times (Under Secretary of State in the Prussian Ministry of War, Reich Commissioner, Reich Minister of Labor, Police President of Berlin, Minister of the Interior of Prussia, etc.), he was also head of the State Police Bureau of Prussia. As an outstanding and influential Social Democrat he was in a position to speak with authority. In his book Grzesinski attempts, among other things, to explain, and of course to justify, the

*"Inside Germany," by Albert C. Grzesinski. E. P. Dutton Co., publishers, N.Y.

failure (in 1918) of the Social Democracy to fulfill "its Socialistic program," to use his own phrase. What he says in this connection should fill the hearts of S.L.P. men with pride—pride over the genius, the clear understanding and insight of the great Marxian internationalist, Daniel De Leon. For here we find complete verification and proof of every charge De Leon ever made against the "National Socialism" of the Social Democrats. Here, indeed, is vindication, vindication no less complete and sweeping for being so long deferred. "The rank and file of the Social Democracy," Grzesinski writes, "did not display great enthusiasm for revolutionary measures." How *could* they have done so? They had frittered away the opportunities of a lifetime for acquiring an understanding of what "revolutionary measures" and, above all, revolutionary principles meant, and they had practised national reformism and labor-fakerism to the exclusion of everything else—how then could they possibly have risen to the revolutionary emergency?

Self-Indictment of German Social Democracy.

He writes further:

"To solve the problems of postwar Germany in any other way [than to sell out to the Industrial Plutocrats] would have required a totally different political and social education of the German worker."

What a terrible indictment, self-indictment, of the national bourgeois Social Democracy, and what a vindication of De Leonist Marxist internationalism! For here lies the crux of the whole matter, here is exposed the crime of the Social Democrats: *The miseducation*

of the German proletariat. Instead of teaching the workers Marxian Socialism, instead of organizing them for the revolution, they were taught bourgeois claptrap, they were seduced with promises that could not be fulfilled, and corrupted with reforms that in the end proved worse than worthless. "Leave it to our leaders," was the watchword. They did, and "the leaders" left them to perish in the swamps of bourgeois nationalism and reformism as "leaders" always have done, and always will do. And those who subscribe to the "leader" principle can hardly quarrel with those who decide to desert "Fuehrer" Grzesinski, or "Fuehrer" Scheidemann, for "Fuehrer" Hitler, if they think that the latter is a better "Fuehrer" than the former. To those who reject the "Fuehrer" principle—that is, the "leader" principle—the term "Fuehrer" Stalin, or "Leader" Roosevelt, is no finer music to the ear than the term "Fuehrer" Hitler!

Grzesinski admits that at least the vast feudal estates of the Junkers might have been expropriated. "It would," he writes, "have been a great forward step to break once and for all the economic, social and political power of the feudal Junkers." But, alas, "here too," he tells us, "practical considerations came before good intentions"! To have taken even that secondary step, he groans, would have upset the commerce of Germany—that is, it would have interfered with German capitalism! And it "would have meant open civil war." Too bad that social revolutions cannot be effected quietly, leaving the nice old *status quo* in peace! And was the *status quo* maintained, and was civil war averted? Behold the slaughter of German workers by the Social Democratic henchman of the reaction, Noske—"your friend and mine," as Grzesinski might have said to the

German Junkers and industrialists! And behold the slaughter by Hitler and his gang!

The Social Democracy and the State.

Even the Hohenzollerns escaped expropriation because Grzesinski and his pals could not find a proper legal formula! He tells us: "In order to legalize the seizure of the large properties of the Hohenzollern and other princely rulers by the revolution, *special legislation was required.*" Fancy that! And the Social Democrats just couldn't find a way of having the "required legislation" passed, so that the Hohenzollern parasites might be painlessly expropriated! Marx's question, "Is the German Social Democracy really infected with the parliamentary disease?"—echoed by De Leon, and affirmatively answered by him again and again—comes thundering down to us. Was it really? Really and truly it was—and the disease was fatal.

"Immediately after the revolution," continues Grzesinski, "the bureaucracy had put itself unreservedly at the disposal of the new state."

Could anything be more revealing? Marx had warned: "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery, and wield it for its own purposes." De Leon had repeated the lesson in a thousand ways; he had presented it at International Congresses again and again, and argued it before International Socialist Bureau sessions, but in vain. The nationalist Social Democrats turned a deaf ear—and for their doing so the German workers paid in blood and tears, and now again (with the rest of the world's

workers) they are paying with their hearts' blood and the very marrow of their bones!

The Social Democrats had never understood the law of revolution, or they had conveniently ignored it for "practical reasons," never understood the logic of a revolutionary situation. Naively, or politician-like, they had assumed that a usurping class could be played with, or that you could fool them. They ignored the lesson of history that revolutions only succeed by being true to their basic premise, by the revolutionists being trustful only of the revolutionary class, and uncompromisingly distrustful of the reaction. Penetratingly, De Leon summed up the matter in these few words:

"Revolutions triumphed, whenever they did triumph, by asserting themselves and marching straight upon their goal. On the other hand, the fate of Wat Tyler ever is the fate of reform. The rebels, in this instance, were weak enough to allow themselves to be wheedled into placing their movement into the hands of Richard II, who promised 'relief'—and brought it by marching the men to the gallows."

De Leonism vs. Social Reformism.

There may be those who would argue that since the Social Democrats really were not Marxists it is not logical to condemn them for not acting as Marxian revolutionists in a social crisis. That, of course, is true, but it does not tell the whole story. Men and movements are not merely judged by what they are, *but also by their initial premises and their claims and pretenses.* The fact that a man habitually violates an otherwise accepted standard and code of morality does not thereby earn him exemption from the judgment which viola-

tion of the code brings with it. The Social Democrats had accepted, and never formally rejected, Marxism and all that goes with it. They were morally bound by its tenets, however much they violated them. They knew, and had accepted, for example, the Marx-Engels analysis of the State; they knew, or were expected to know, that the State could never function as the administrative organ of Socialist society; they knew, and had never rejected, Marx's dictum that the working class cannot take the "ready-made" State machinery and wield it for Socialist constructive and administrative purposes. And they also knew, though they might have rejected, De Leon's fulfilment of the Marxist "formula," the Industrial Union government or administration. Had they not rejected De Leon's "plan," had they taken steps in time to carry it out, and to apply it to German conditions, there would have been a different story to tell from 1918 to 1933. And what was that plan? It was twofold in character. In a brief paraphrase of De Leon, this is it:

A—The organizing of the working class into integral, Socialist Industrial Unions—unions dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism, and the supplanting of the political State with an industrial form of government.

B—The Socialist, the working class, Industrial Union, obedient to the dictates of Social Evolution, casts the nations, and with the nations, their governments, in molds entirely different from the molds in which class rule casts nations and existing governments. While class rule casts nations, and with the nations, their governments, in the mold of territory, Industrial Unionism, cutting across political lines of demarcation, casts the nations in the mold of useful occupations, and

transforms the governments of nations into the representations from these, namely, from the industries. Accordingly, Industrial Unionism organizes the useful occupations—the industries of the world—into the constituencies of Future Society. Thus Industrial Unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and, the goal once reached, the Industrial Union is the Socialist Republic in operation.

Had the Social Democrats understood and acted according to this plan, who knows what tragedies might have been averted—who can visualize what realizable promises might have been fulfilled? But they did not heed the warning of social science—they did not heed these stirring and exhortative words by De Leon:

"Unite! Unite on the economic field upon the only basis that economic unity is possible—the basis of solidarity of the working class, the only solid fact from which political unity can be reflected! Unite! Unite upon the only economic principle capable of backing up the right of the labor ballot with the might to enforce it! . . . Unite for the emancipation of the working class, and to save civilization from a catastrophe!"

VIII.

Code of Legality of Proletarian Revolution

Pathetically, Grzesinski returns again and again to his question: "Why," he writes, "the question might rightly be asked, did the revolutionary regime conduct itself in such an unrevolutionary manner?" And he answers his own question with what seems an ill-concealed

sneer. "Here, too," he writes, "an explanation can be found in the touching faith of the German republican leadership in law and order." "Law and order!" They have, indeed, "law and order" now! The warning by De Leon, uttered in prophetic words years before in his magnificent "Two Pages from Roman History," had gone unheeded by the bourgeois-nationalistic Social Democrats:

"The Proletarian Revolution," said De Leon, "marches by its own light; its acts are to be judged by the Code of Legality that itself carries in its folds, *not* by the standard of existing Law, which is but the reflex of existing Usurpation. . . . A new social system brings along a new Code of Morals."

But the German Social Democrats cried for good old capitalist law and order as children in distress cry for their mothers! And they did, indeed, get what they cried for! Hitler and his fellow gangsters, egged on by the Junkers and the big industrialists, gave them lessons to which they could not turn deaf ears, as they had done when De Leon warned them, and when he tried to teach them. As is all too familiar to all of us, the Nazis presently conspired to overthrow the Social Democratic regime, or what was left of it, aided and abetted by the treacherous Stalinist Machiavellians who, in their stupidity, thought they could play the Social Democrats against Hitler, or vice versa, and come out on top themselves. Grzesinski quotes the rat-faced Joseph Goebbels as having said:

"Our enemies furnished us with parliamentary and democratic means which enabled us to overthrow them. It was their own choice, but that need not be any inducement to us to make the same mistake."

The old "ready-made" State machinery, which could not serve the essential purposes of the proletarian revolution, did serve completely in finally crushing, not merely the Social Democratic government, but whatever was left of working class organizations and working class hopes and aspirations, in Germany.

De Leon's Warning Ignored.

And they *might* have listened to, and heeded, De Leon — not as one is supposed to be listening to a prophet, nor be frightened by the forebodings of doom uttered by a Cassandra, but as one is expected to listen to a scientist who, if he be a true social scientist, does possess the power to foresee and to foretell, within certain limitations. Instead, Mr. Grzesinski asks the pathetic question: "Who could have foreseen in these turbulent times that a day would come when the German people would follow a political pied piper and a movement that sought to replace the will of the people by that of a Fuehrer?" The answer is that a De Leon could have foreseen—*did* foresee. But to him who will not listen, the words of the wisest sage are as the senseless babblings of the fool.

No, they were much too busy with "practical affairs" to worry about principles and the logic of things, either of the present or the future. Much too busy building so-called working class cooperative apartments, sports palaces, "labor banks" and coffin societies; much too busy legislating "social security," old age pensions, unemployment insurance, the effect of all of which was to make capitalism more secure for the German industrialists, to provide better and relatively cheaper labor

power for them, and more of it. Mr. Grzesinski writes: "It would require volumes to enumerate the achievements of the postwar era. Far-reaching social and labor legislation became one of the pillars of the new state." "Pillars," he said—"pillars"—that crumbled like chalk when the logical, the *inevitable* reaction set in! And he whines that "the German people . . . did not appreciate the benefits derived from the new democratic order." Perhaps because hunger in a "working class cooperative apartment" is as gnawing as in a hovel—perhaps because a gilded cage is as oppressive as an iron cage!

Grzesinski rhapsodizes: "Everywhere the citizens were provided with fine housing developments, playgrounds, public parks and sports stadia. New dwellings to the number of 2,652,165, rehousing more than seventeen per cent of the entire German population, had been constructed in the postwar era. . . . *Today all this has ceased.*" It has ceased due to the treason and monumental folly of the Social Democrats and their allies. ceased, because, in the first place, in their reform-nationalistic blindness, they could not read the handwriting on the wall, could not see the warning written there by De Leon's hand, in words such as these, for instance:

"At the present stage of civilization there is no reform worth speaking of. . . .

"Every reform granted by capitalism is a concealed measure of reaction. . . .

"Where a social revolution is pending and, for whatever reason, is not accomplished, reaction is the alternative. . . ."

Thus spoke Daniel De Leon, the scientist, De Leon the Marxian internationalist.

The nationalistic bourgeois reformers, masquerading as Socialists, fighting De Leon bitterly when he attacked their provincial reformism, have unwittingly proved that there is no reform worth speaking of.

Postwar Social Democratic Germany has proved that reforms *are* concealed measures of reaction.

Reformers everywhere, but postwar Social Democratic Germany in particular, wherever social revolution *was* pending, have proved that, where such a revolution is not effected, reaction, stark and bloody reaction, *is* the inescapable alternative. May these lessons now be learned, and may we all from now on heed the great De Leon's warning!

IX.

Socialism Alone Serves Demands Of Civilization

As I remarked earlier in this address, society is emerging out of the old procrustean national bed into the spacious internationalism that looms up before us. The question confronting us is: Shall this new world be an international of industrial feudalism, with the world's workers bound in economic serfdom; or shall it be an integrated International of the world's workers, organized as industrial freemen, planning and working cooperatively together in a universal brotherhood? The decision will depend upon whether the workers heed the voice of De Leon, the social scientist and Marxian internationalist, or whether they heed the many-tongued babel of reformism and compromise.

For the former as surely leads to freedom, affluence and peace for all, as the latter leads to slavery, intensified misery, renewed and greater wars, with the world's workers again the chief sufferers, while the privileged few, the exploiters and their retainers, continue to enjoy the good things of life—the good things produced by Labor alone, but stolen from Labor. These are the questions, these are the alternative prospects, all of us must ponder. Of postwar planners, so-called, there is no end. Every day produces a new crop, but all of them of a dull sameness that has a soporific effect on the mind. Perhaps that is part of the scheme, the better to tighten the chains of slavery on the workers—the more unsuspectingly to encompass their complete slavery. Roughly, however, they fall into two groups: The plutocratic diehards, who everlastingly chant their piece about preserving “private enterprise,” and the starry-eyed reformers who plead for State ownership or State regulation of the means of production.

The temptation to take up the various schemes presented by the representatives of both groups is very strong, but time does not, of course, permit doing so, nor does it properly lie within our present subject, except insofar as these schemes and “plans” offer contrasts to De Leonist internationalism. In the final analysis, however, these groups merge into one, since both groups look upon the political State as an essential element in their plans. For it is, of course, ultimately immaterial whether one starts out (as the reformers do) with the purpose of capturing the State, assigning to it ownership and operation of industry (assuming the latter is possible), or whether one starts out as a “free enterpriser,” using the State as a bulwark, as a

guarantor of one's properties and enterprises, and as a source of subsidy, as or when one's “private enterprise” genius fails one! For in either case the workers will be held in subjection by the State, very much as they are now kept in subjection as a consequence of the war.

The “Free Enterprise” Fantasy.

The pleas and whinings of the “free enterprisers” are particularly nauseating, because they are so hypocritical. They know that there is no such thing as “free enterprise” except for the small minority owning the instruments of production and all that goes with such ownership. They are obviously talking about capitalism. There *can* be no free enterprise where the vast majority are totally divorced from the tools of production, to which they can secure access only by selling themselves into wage slavery. To the vast majority there is not, there cannot be, either freedom or individual enterprise in such a situation. When the plutocracy and their allies talk about private property rights being sacred, when they say that where there is no “private property” (as they understand it) there can be no freedom, they lie, or they babble like fools. We are living under a social system where opportunity to own property (and I am not talking about toothbrushes or 2 by 4 lots!) is permanently denied to upward of 85 per cent of the people.

In the pre-capitalist era the workman owned his own tools, and he was economically a free man. Now the “tools of production” (the mammoth plants) are owned by a small plutocratic minority who have the power to deny (and do deny when it suits their interests) the workers access to them except on terms of

slavery. This is the "free enterprise" system, and this is what we are daily told our boys are fighting to preserve on seven seas and five continents! This is what they call freedom, and our American way!

Noting the fact that at one time the workman enjoyed the right of ownership of the tools he worked with, a writer in a recent issue of the *Nation* quotes the late Thorstein Veblen as having said that "in the course of time, however, the right of private property came to mean not the right of a workingman to own tools and the things that he made with those tools, but the right of absentee stockholders [and those very much present, too!] to close down factories and to deny to workingmen access to the means of production whenever the . . . owners thought operation unprofitable"!

In short, the "free enterprise" system—that is, capitalism—establishes this set of facts:

1—The worker, bereft of property, or the tools of production, must sell himself into wage slavery. Slavery, in whatever form or degree, can never be made to spell *Freedom*.

2—As wage slaves the workers are robbed of the major portion of what they produce, the bulk going to the State and to the property-owning class in one form or another. No free or decent society can exist which rests on the robbery of one class by another.

3—A virtually absolute despotism prevails in the industries and wherever wage labor is employed and exploited. Economic despotism can never be made to spell *Democracy*.

4—As a class the workers are doomed to lifelong slavery. It is an indispensable condition for privately

owned industry (capitalism) to have available a well-stocked labor market. "Free enterprise" could not survive a day if there were not always millions of workers so reduced in circumstance as to compel their selling their labor power for a price—a price that at best barely keeps them above the starvation line. Where the door of "opportunity" is fatedly and permanently closed to the majority, it is fraudulent to insist that, because here and there a worker escapes from wage slavery into the intermediary or topmost layers of society, therefore this proves "free enterprise" (capitalism) to be a system of opportunity to all. The inherent *denial* of opportunity can never be made to spell possible or guaranteed opportunity.

The Two Nations—Parasites and Producers.

On these basic and incontestable facts and circumstances all capitalist or social-reformistic postwar plans inescapably suffer shipwreck. There is but one plan, but one system that will serve historic necessity and the demands and requirements of civilized man, and that is SOCIALISM—Socialism, the Industrial Union Republic of Labor, the Marx-De Leon "plan." International Socialism alone can fulfill the promise implied in the perfection of our marvelous productive machine. International Economic Imperialism (and there is no alternative) would not only frustrate and deny that promise to mankind, but it would (as it has always done) fatedly keep the entire world in continued misery and strife, with new and more terrible wars for this and as yet unborn generations. The modern class struggle *must* be terminated, which means that the *cause* of the class struggle must be uprooted, and that cause is capi-

talism—call it “free enterprise,” international economic imperialism, or what you will. And until the hour of liberation strikes for the workers, they must beware of being once more deluded by the claims of nationalists and chauvinists, of whatever stripe, color or uniform, remembering that “red” or “pink” nationalism and chauvinism are as fatal to their class interests as is “white” or “black” chauvinism. And the revolutionary vanguard of the workers must ever keep the fact before them, they must fix firmly in their minds the dictum of Daniel De Leon, namely, that—

“International Socialism is founded on the Socialist principle that there are only two Nations—the Exploiting Idlers and the Exploited Toilers.”

X

De Leonist Internationalism Spells Universal Freedom

Daniel De Leon came by his internationalism logically and consistently, both in his studies and convictions, in his own person and by the traditions of this great and magnificent country. It was De Leon himself who quoted the pridefully expressed hope of Benjamin Franklin that the blue field of the American flag might some day contain stars representing every country on earth. Franklin thus visualized, and anticipated, the International Brotherhood of Man.

As De Leon remarked: “This fact confers upon the American flag the lofty distinction of being the first on earth to . . . herald the solidarity of peoples, the

first drapery-symbol of Peace on Earth;—that fact renders the American flag the anticipation of the Red Flag of International Brotherhood. . . .” And we are reminded of the noble declarations by Tom Paine and William Lloyd Garrison, who, in terms strikingly similar, expressed their faith in the International Brotherhood of Man. Tom Paine, you will recall, wrote:

“The world is my country,
All mankind are my brethren,
To do good is my religion. . . .”

And Garrison:

“My country is the world; my countrymen are mankind.”

And Wendell Phillips, who was greatly admired by De Leon, spoke these words which must have rung in De Leon’s mind even before he became a Marxian internationalist. Said Phillips:

“I rejoice at every effort workingmen make to organize. . . . Men sometimes say to me, ‘Are you an Internationalist?’ I say, ‘I do not know what an Internationalist is’; but they tell me it is a system by which the workingmen from London to Gibraltar, from Moscow to Paris, can clasp hands. Then I say God speed, God speed, to that or any similar movement.”

And we know that De Leon must have been stirred, as we have all been stirred, and profoundly moved, by Lincoln’s nobly expressed sentiment of fraternal internationalism:

“The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people of all nations, and tongues, and kindred.”

The world has shrunk to dimensions even smaller than those of some nations in the past. To be an internationalist in these times, to maintain an international outlook, is the duty of every thinking man and woman. But we should not be content with a mere international outlook—it should be our pride, we should hold it a privilege, to preach and practise a *De Leonist internationalism*. Guided by his precepts and example in this, as in all other respects, we can never go far wrong. And in these grave and dangerous times—dangerous to our movement, dangerous to the cause of the working class—we cannot afford to go far wrong.

In his report to the International Socialist Congress held at Stuttgart in 1907, De Leon closed by quoting these lines:

"The dreamers who gaze while we battle the waves
 May see us in sunshine or shade;
 Yet, true to our course, though our shadow grow dark,
 We'll trim our broad sails as before,
 And stand by the rudder that governs the bark,
 Nor ask how we look from the shore!"

The S.L.P. still stands unshaken, hands firmly on the rudder, true to course, true to objective, and caring little about "how we look from the shore."

And so, on this natal day of Daniel De Leon, we rededicate ourselves to renewed and intensified efforts in the cause to which he gave unstinted devotion and unfaltering service—the cause and the program which he so immeasurably enriched and enlarged, the cause of Socialist or Proletarian Internationalism, the cause of Universal Human Brotherhood.

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